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COUNTRY NORTH VIETNAM

DOI MID-JULY 1968

SUBJECT DEATH OF U.S. PILOT IN HAIPHONG PROVINCE, NORTH VIETNAM

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SOURCE

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1. IN MID-JULY 1968, A SAW A PILOT FALL TO HIS DEATH IN KIEN THIEP VILLAGE, TIEN LANG DISTRICT, HAIPHONG PROVINCE, NORTH VIETNAM (NVN), AFTER HIS PARACHUTE COLLAPSED WHILE IN DESCENT. A SAW THE PILOT'S AIRCRAFT HIT BY A SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE OVER HAIPHONG CITY, WITH THE AIRCRAFT BREAKING INTO TWO PIECES AND THE PILOT EJECTING. THE PILOT WAS WEARING A GREY FLIGHT SUIT, AND HIS WHITE CHUTE INITIALLY APPEARED TO FUNCTION PROPERLY, BUT SUDDENLY THE PARACHUTE COLLAPSED AND THE PILOT PLUMMETED TO THE GROUND, LANDING IN A BAMBOO THICKET.

2. A SAID HE SAW ONE PIECE OF THE PLANE FALL IN BAC PHONG HAMLET (XH583369), KIEN THIEP VILLAGE; HE OBSERVED THE INCIDENT FROM ABOUT TWO KILOMETERS AND DID NOT GO NEAR THE AREA WHERE THE PILOT FELL FOR FEAR OF COMING UNDER FIRE FROM OTHER U.S. AIRCRAFT. LATER IN THE DAY, A CADRE FROM TIEN LANG DISTRICT TOLD A THAT THE PILOT, AN AMERICAN, WAS KILLED IN THE FALL AND THAT HE HAD BEEN PILOTING AN F-4H AIRCRAFT.

3. (FIELD COMMENT: THE FOLLOWING IS THE JOINT CASUALTY RESOLUTION CENTER (JCRC) EVALUATION OF THE REPORT: EXTENSIVE EFFORTS TO CORRELATE THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT RESULTED IN THE POSSIBLE IDENTIFICATION OF THE INCIDENT INVOLVING

LIEUTENANT CHARLES R. LEE, U.S. NAVY, DOWNED ON 9 JULY 1967. LEE WAS FLYING AN A-4C NEAR HAIPHONG, NORTH VIETNAM. HIS AIRCRAFT WAS HIT BY A SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE. THE AIRCRAFT WENT OUT OF CONTROL AND WAS SEEN SPINNING DOWNWARD IN FLAMES. NO PARACHUTE WAS OBSERVED AND NO COMMUNICATION WAS ESTABLISHED WITH THE PILOT. SINCE SEVERAL YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE INCIDENT OCCURRED, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SOURCE SAW THE CRASH IN 1967 RATHER THAN IN 1968. THE LOCATION OF THE CRASH SITE GIVEN BY THE SOURCE CLOSELY MATCHES INFORMATION ON HAND. LIEUTENANT LEE IS PRESENTLY CARRIED AS MISSING-IN-ACTION BY HIS PARENT SERVICE.)

4.

5. FIELD DISSEM: DEFENSE ATTACHE FOR JCRC REPRESENTATIVE
IN SAIGON: SENT TO CINCPAC (FOR CINCPAC AND POLAD ONLY)
USSAG AND VIENTIANE (FOR JCRC REPRESENTATIVES ONLY)